

The Florence Tribune.

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FLORENCE, PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA, SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1899.

NO. 25.

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RECLAIM ARID LANDS.

It is the Plain Duty of the Government.

(Extract from an Address by George H. Maxwell before the Trans-Mississippi Congress, June 1st, 1899.)

"Look at the map of the United States! The western half of it an arid region, with a fringe of humid country on the shores of the Pacific, and here and there an oasis where irrigation has reclaimed the desert. And yet this vast territory would, if reclaimed, support a dense and prosperous population greater in numbers than the entire population of the whole United States to-day. The enormous opportunities for increased home markets for our manufactures and opportunities for home seekers which its reclamation would create make it worth the while of every manufacturer who wants markets, every wage-earner who wants work, every merchant who wants trade, every transportation company that wants traffic, and every man in America who wants a home on the land, to grapple with this great problem, and make the conquest of arid America the greatest victory of peace which this generation will accomplish.

"Let us then see if there is a way in which this great result can be accomplished and the army of workers enlisted which will subjugate the deserts by digging canals instead of trenches and building great storage reservoirs instead of fortifications.

"Can it be done by private enterprise; by individual effort; by companies or corporations, or in any manner by the investment of private capital for a profit as a business investment?

"Absolutely, emphatically and positively no. That is impossible. It is as impossible as it was for the great canals of India or the immense dam to be built across the Nile, or the great levee system of the Mississippi, or the Eads jetties to be built by private enterprise. The works required are too vast and the beneficial results too widely scattered to make their construction possible by private capital or under any plan which would load the cost of the construction upon the land reclaimed—load it upon the back of the man with the hoe' who must till the soil and to whose prosperity all classes of the community must look for prosperity.

"Experience has proved that the cost of these great irrigation works, if added to the price of the land reclaimed, brings it beyond the reach of the industrious wage-earner or the worker who wants a home and who is willing to go out into the west and conquer it from nature with his own strong arm. He has not the accumulated capital to pay a high price for his home, but he is willing to work for it and to create it with his labor. In other words, if we are to get a multitude of new settlers on the now arid lands of the west we must bring those lands within reach of the multitude. We must so plan a policy for the reclamation that the same sturdy class of settlers who came out and broke the prairies of Illinois and Iowa and made those states great and prosperous can now work out still farther west and find opportunities where men with labor but without capital can become home-builders and state-builders.

"Now, can this be done, and done under a policy which is thoroughly sound and state-like? Undoubtedly it can! Undoubtedly and beyond all question it can, if the whole American people will wake up to the grandeur and vast possibilities to the nation of the problem. But those who would be most immediately benefited—the wage-earner who wants work and a home market—must rouse themselves and make it their cause and make the annexation of arid America the shibboleth and rallying cry which will stir the whole American people to a realization of the boundless wealth that lies latent in the deserts of America. It needs only the magic touch of water to shower riches upon the whole people, for all must share in the benefits which would come from moving the western line of our dense population, which now stops in the center of Kansas and Nebraska, clear across until it joins with the fertile coast valleys of the Pacific. Kansas, as she is in the center territorially, should be the center of population of the United States, and the trade of such great western cities as St. Louis, Chicago, St. Paul and Minneapolis, Omaha, Kansas City and Wichita (why Wichita is right in the center of the whole thing!) would be quadrupled by putting as dense a population extending clear across the country to the shores of the Pacific, as now extends to the eastward as far as the Atlantic seaboard.

"I have said this could be done. How can it be done? Simply by bringing the water necessary to irrigate the new home of the settler to the arid

lands within reach of the individual effort, so that when he sets his plow in the desert the water will follow the furrow. Create conditions which will, without loading them down with debt, give to the settlers who are now tilling these arid lands with insufficient water supplies, enough to insure their prosperity and enough to enable new settlers to go out and take up homes on the public lands and build for themselves and with their own labor and teams and scrapers, the distributing canals and laterals necessary to bring the water to their land. This may easily be done by the construction by the federal government of the storage reservoirs to save the waters now wasted in winter floods and by allowing the states to lease the public grazing lands, and use the revenues to build the large main line canals necessary to bring the water within this individual reach of the settler.

"This whole plan has been gradually evolved through a series of years by the National Irrigation Congress, which has held seven annual sessions, and is embodied in its resolutions; and is in brief as follows:

"(a) Where the government owns the land, it should, wherever it is necessary, build the irrigation works to reclaim it, and sell the land and water together to actual settlers only in small tracts for the cost of construction of distribution systems added to the government price of the land. The cost of storage reservoirs should not be put on the land.

"All storage reservoirs should be built as internal improvements, and permanently maintained by the state or federal government, as an absolute assurance of safety to communities on the land below them. In no other way can the inherent fear of settlement under reservoir systems be overcome.

"The government has 700,000,000 acres of arid public lands which can be reclaimed by irrigation, and could sell and settle it just as fast as it could reclaim it. An Oklahoma stampede would follow the opening to settlement of every tract so reclaimed.

"Money paid by the government for labor would come back to pay for land. Men wanting homes would seek this employment to get money to buy the land.

"(b) Federal storage reservoirs to save the waters which now go to waste and do damage and destruction below should be built as a part of the established national policy of internal improvements, the use of the water so stored to be free to the people forever, without toll or charge of any kind, and to be distributed under the laws of the states, as recommended in the report of Colonel Miran M. Chittenden on Reservoir Sites and urged by the resolutions of the Irrigation Congress.

"The share which ought to go to the arid states and territories out of the aggregate disbursements from the national treasury for internal improvements should be devoted to the building of these storage reservoirs within their borders. Why should the arid west not have its share of the vast sums of money expended for internal improvements? What reason is there that the west should continue contributing to build internal improvements for the east and south, unless the west is given an equitable proportion of all moneys expended for such purposes?

"(c) Forests should be preserved and reforested where necessary, as natural reservoirs and sources of water supply; and the public grazing lands should be leased and the revenues derived therefrom used to build large irrigation works, such as reservoirs, main canals, and great dams or diversion works, which would be beyond the scope of the resources of the land owners. Such works should be maintained, controlled, and operated by the states, just as they are by the British government in India.

"(d) Systems for the distribution and delivery of water to irrigators, after the water supplies have been made available to them through the adoption of the policy above set forth, should be organized as co-operative water companies, with the stock perpetually appurtenant to the land, so that farmers could build the canals and ditches themselves, as was done by the early Mormon settlers, and thus get irrigation without debt, and share the burdens and benefits of the water system in the proportion of their respective acreage holdings.

"This proposed policy is the only way this problem of the settlement of the arid region can be solved. It is not a question of choice of ways. There is no choice of ways. There is but one way, and this is that way. Whether it is accomplished in a few years or in many, depends entirely on the amount of public interest aroused in it. There are few who realize how important the problem is, and how serious and

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widespread are the evil conditions which exist to-day all through the arid west, and which will, so long as they continue to exist, prevent any full tide of immigration from again coming to that region.

The Arid Lands.

(From the Los Angeles Times, March 27, 1899.)

Several weeks ago The Times published an article on the proposed cession of arid lands by the federal government to the various states and territories in which they are located, disapproving of the suggestion, for reasons given at the time, among which the chief was that it would certainly be a dangerous thing to permit the average state or territorial legislature to control the disposition of property of such value, belonging to the public. This line of argument was disapproved of by Governor Murphy of Arizona, who wrote a letter, taking the other side of the question, which was also discussed in these columns. In this connection it is interesting to note that a similar question has come up for discussion in Wyoming, which state has made noteworthy advances in irrigation during the past few years. Wyoming enjoys the services of one of the foremost irrigation experts of the country, in the person of Elwood Mead, who is state engineer. In his biennial report for 1898 Mr. Mead, referring to the question of the grazing lands, which form so large a portion of the area of some of the western states and territories, shows that the stability of western live stock industries and the utilization of the large rivers both require that the grazing lands be leased. In preceding reports Mr. Mead had advocated this being done by the states and territories, and had regarded the cession of these lands to the states as a necessary preliminary thereto. He still thinks that, so far as Wyoming is concerned, such cession would be wholly beneficial, but he has discovered, during the past year, that some of the other states have widely different interests, and that the same system might not work so well there. Mr. Mead says, in his report:

"The principal reason for advocating cession has been the desire to put an end to range stock controversies which threaten domestic peace; to render irrigation agriculture more profitable, and to secure for the state the funds needed to aid in building large canals and extensive reservoir systems. But all states are not equipped as is Wyoming with a land department for the management of leases, or an engineering bureau for the construction of public works, and in the states differently situated it has been proposed, as a substitute for cession, that the general government should inaugurate a leasing system for the non-irrigable grazing lands to be handled by the general land office in connection with its disposal of the lands which can be farmed, the funds arising from such leases to be expended in these states in building canals and reservoirs for reclaiming the irrigable public land. I see no reason why this could not be done and why it would not be an immeasurable improvement over the lack of management or control which now prevails. It is not a question of securing title to the land which is important, but the inauguration of a system which will preserve the native grasses from injury, if not destruction, through overstocking the range, and secure the conservation and best use of the waters of our rivers which now run to waste."

The same argument, advanced by the state engineer of Wyoming in regard to the grazing lands of the west, holds equally good as to the arid lands, which some persons would have the federal government cede to the various states and territories in which they are located.

Boyhood's Happy Days.

I'd like to be a boy again, without a woe or care, with freckles scattered on my face and hayseed in my hair. I'd like to rise at 4 o'clock and do a hundred chores and saw the wood and feed the hogs and lock the stable doors; and herd the hens and watch the bees and take the mules to drink; and teach the turkeys how to swim so that they wouldn't sink; and milk about a hundred cows and bring the wood to burn; and stand out in the sun all day and churn and churn and churn; and wear my brother's cast-off clothes and walk four miles to school and get a licking

every day for breaking some old rule and then get home again at night and do the chores some more, and milk the cows and feed the hogs and carry mules galore; and then crawl wearily upstairs to seek my little bed, and hear dad say: "That worthless boy! He isn't worth his bread!" I'd like to be a boy again—a boy has so much fun! his life is just a round of mirth from rise to set of sun. I guess there's nothing pleasanter than closing stable doors and herding hens and chasing bees and doing evening chores.—(Unidentified.)

The population of Arizona is increasing very rapidly and will approach 95,000 at the coming census, without doubt. A large increase will be apparent in Yavapai, probably double the population of ten years ago; Maricopa county will more than double her population of ten years ago, as this city now has fifty percent more population than the whole county had in 1890; Gila county will produce a large increase, probably more than four times her last census; Cochise, in the single town of Bisbee, now has nearly the population of the whole county in 1890, and the town of Pearce nearly as many more; Pima has been making large gains, as has Mohave county. In fact, every county in the Territory will show an important growth and that growth has almost all been within the past five years. In fact, the Territory has just begun to grow in population, and within the next five years we can reasonably expect Arizona to double her present figure, especially if we should become a state.—(Phoenix Herald.)

The Copper Queen people continue to show their confidence in their Blakes properties, as appears from the following excerpt from the Engineering and Mining Journal: "The smelter's capacity at Bisbee is about to be increased from 600 to 800 tons daily, and several improvements are planned, including a new furnace, a complete system of matte receivers and slag settlers; hydraulic pressure system, including accumulators, pressure pumps, etc. George O. Brady, the Salt Lake City representative of the Gates Iron Works, was here recently with the drawings, which were approved by President Douglas and Manager Williams. It is learned from the Gates people that the plant will be ready for duty within ninety days. Of the mine there are no news items other than favorable. Deepest working, 600 feet, where the ore is reported to run above 6 per cent. The company has 1,500 men on the payroll."

Rudyard Kipling undoubtedly got his wit from his maternal grandfather, the Rev. George B. MacDonald, a Wesleyan clergyman. It is related of this bright MacDonald that in the days when he was courting the lady whom he afterward married the father-in-law to be—an aged Methodist with extremely strict notions in regard to the proprieties—was injudicious enough on one occasion to enter the parlor without giving any warning of his approach. The consequence was that he found the sweethearts occupying a single chair. Deeply shocked by this spectacle the old man solemnly said: "Mr. MacDonald, when I was courting Mrs. Brown she sat on one side of the room and I on the other." MacDonald replied: "That is what I should have done if I had been courting Mrs. Brown."—(Troy Press.)

Mrs. Stanford has deeded several million dollars worth of property to the Stanford university. The gift is so vast one can scarcely realize its proportions. The revenue stamps required amounted to \$7,838,200, at twenty cents a thousand dollars.

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